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THE CONSEQUENCES OF IDEOLOGICAL  
GENOCIDES AND THEIR ROLE  
IN PREVENTION

by

Kurt Jonassohn

Concordia University  
1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. West  
Montréal, Québec  
Canada H3G 1M8

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# THE CONSEQUENCES OF IDEOLOGICAL GENOCIDES AND THEIR ROLE IN PREVENTION<sup>1</sup>

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Kurt Jonassohn<sup>2</sup>

## ABSTRACT

The Introduction to this paper briefly outlines the reasons for a scholarly definition of genocide that differs somewhat from the definition given in the U.N. Convention. It also discusses a typology of genocides, with particular emphasis on 'ideological' (internal) genocides because these are the ones that are most important and that occur most frequently in the twentieth century.

Unlike most earlier genocides in history, most twentieth century genocides have two characteristics of great importance for the present argument. First, they are committed to implement a belief, ideology, or theory. Second, their victims usually are members of the perpetrator society. The reasons why these two characteristics are important are (1) that the ideological imperative is never realized, and (2) that the costs of the genocide to the perpetrator society are very large and very long-lasting. To indicate the enormity of these costs to the perpetrator society this paper examines several cases in some detail, in addition to the Armenian genocide.

The basic argument of the paper is as follows: In order to perform a genocide it is not required that the population of the perpetrator state support such actions. But it is absolutely essential that those who do not support it be passive bystanders. If the teaching of history and of social studies were to include the above facts about the magnitude of the costs

<sup>1</sup> I want to thank my friends and colleagues Frank Chalk, Norman Cohn, Helen Fein, and Leo Kuper for their comments on an earlier draft of this paper. This earlier and shorter version was presented at the 6th International Symposium in Victimology, 28 August - 1 September 1988 in Jerusalem. The present version was presented at the International Congress of the 75th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide: History, Theory, Political Responsibility, held in Yerevan, 17-20 April 1990.

<sup>2</sup> Director, Montreal Institute for Genocide Studies, and Professor of Sociology, Concordia University, Montreal.



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incurred and of their long-lasting effects for the perpetrator society, then its citizens are unlikely to remain passive bystanders in a future genocide. Thus, spreading the knowledge of the deleterious consequences of genocides for the perpetrator societies can become one of the methods that may help to prevent the occurrence of future genocides.

## INTRODUCTION

Jules Baillet reports that the Egyptian monuments depict the wars of the third millennium B.C. as totally destructive.. Whole populations disappeared because they were either massacred, taken captive, or because they had fled across the desert. Even the land was rendered unproductive and uninhabitable, either by sword or by fire.<sup>3</sup> This pattern of warfare in ancient Egypt seems to have changed only about 1,000 years later during the conflicts that preceded the XII. dynasty (1991-1786 B.C.). Baillet argues that the change was the unintended consequence of the dominant motives of the warriors - which was their greed for loot and ransom. That greed caused massacres to be replaced by enslavement and imprisonment, although the exacting of tribute did not appear before Egypt's Asiatic conquests.<sup>4</sup>

The Old Testament contains a number of cases that today would be considered as genocides - not because of the casualties of warfare, but because of the killing of non-combatant women and children. Not all of these cases can be considered as factual, especially in view of the fact that

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<sup>3</sup> Jules Baillet, *Le Régime Pharaonique dans ses rapports avec l'évolution de la morale en Egypte. Tome Premier* (Grande Imprimerie de Blois, 1912), 151-152.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 167-168.

the Amalekites seem to have been massacred several times over.<sup>5</sup> The importance of these reports lies in the manner in which these genocides are referred to, which would indicate that such behavior, far from being unusual, was considered customary at that time.

Westington tells us that the Romans committed routine genocide on cities that resisted them. It was the custom to massacre every living creature, man and beast. The earliest case he reports is from 494 B.C.<sup>6</sup> Only when labour was needed, were a certain number of slaves taken. Then the conquered city was razed to the ground and burned. The Gauls, who destroyed Rome in 390 B.C., used similar methods of dealing with their enemies and are said to have murdered all whom they captured, regardless of sex or age.<sup>7</sup> Hannibal also adopted the same methods after the capture of Saguntum.<sup>8</sup>

Since then genocide has been practiced throughout most of history in all parts of the world, although it did not attract much attention because genocide was usually accepted as the deserved fate of the vanquished.

A brief word needs to be said here about the new term 'genocide' and the very old crime that it denotes.<sup>9</sup> Raphael Lemkin was instrumental in

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<sup>5</sup> *The Bible*. Translated out of the original tongues by the commandment of King James the first anno 1611 (New York: AMS Press, 1967), Exodus, 17:8-16; Deuteronomy, 25:17-19; 1 Samuel, 15:2-8; 1 Samuel, 30:1-19.

<sup>6</sup> Mars McClelland Westington, *Atrocities in Roman Warfare to 133 B.C.* (Chicago, Ill.: Private Edition. Distributed by the University of Chicago Libraries, 1938), 70., 77.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 71.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>9</sup> The term was coined by Raphael Lemkin, *Axis Rule in Occupied*



getting the United Nations to adopt in 1948 a "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide".<sup>10</sup> It defined genocide in a way that permitted a majority to vote for it. But that definition of genocide was so restrictive that most post-World War II genocides would not qualify as such under it. Since it recognizes as potential victims only the members of a "national, ethnical, racial or religious group," social, political and economic groups do not qualify, although they are frequently singled out as victims. For scholarly purposes the following definition seems to lead to better results:

Genocide is a form of one-sided mass killing in which a state or other authority intends to destroy a group, as that group and membership in it are defined by the perpetrator.<sup>11</sup>

This definition has the advantage that it applies to the relevant mass killings during all periods of history. As in the above-cited examples, most genocides before the modern period were committed in the building and maintaining of empires. The perpetrators' motives can usually be distinguished as either

the need to eliminate a real or perceived threat, or  
the wish to spread terror among real or potential enemies, or  
the urge to acquire economic wealth, or

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*Europe*. (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment, 1944), 92.

<sup>10</sup> Leo Kuper, *Genocide* (Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1981), Appendix 1.

<sup>11</sup> For a more detailed discussion of definitions and typologies see: Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn, *The History and Sociology of Genocide: Analyses and Case Studies*. (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1990), Part I.

some combination of these motives.

These three types of genocide could be subsumed under the broader category of utilitarian genocides. This term is meant to denote the common features of these genocides: they were committed to serve a concrete purpose and their successful execution produced the desired results. Thus, the consequence for the perpetrator was a clear gain, usually achieved at minimal cost. The other feature of these utilitarian genocides was that the victim groups were located outside the perpetrator's society. It was, of course, the victims who bore the terrible costs of genocide; but since they were not members of the perpetrator's society, these costs did not detract from the benefits obtained by the perpetrators. These particular types of genocides have, for a variety of reasons, become quite rare in the twentieth century. One of these reasons is the disappearance of empires.<sup>12</sup>

In this century, we now have to deal mostly with ideological genocides that are performed to implement a theory, belief, or ideology. There are several significant differences that distinguish ideological genocides from the earlier types, and these differences have a bearing on the effects for the perpetrator society. First, their aim -- to impose an ideological imperative -- has never yet been carried out successfully. Second, the victim groups are part of, and located within, the perpetrators' societies.<sup>13</sup> Third, the costs to

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<sup>12</sup> One of these now rare cases is that of East Timor, performed in the expansion of Indonesia's realm. For a summary of that case see: José Ramos-Horta, *Funu: the Unfinished Saga of East Timor* (Trenton, N.J.: The Red Sea Press, 1987).

<sup>13</sup> This second difference may even be used as the basis of a new typology: external versus internal genocides. The genocides performed by Nazi



the perpetrators and to the victim groups are both borne within the perpetrator societies, except for those members of the victim groups that survived and were able to flee.

An empirical study of the relevant cases will show not only that the consequences of ideological (internal) genocides for the perpetrator societies are a burden of enormous costs, but also that it takes a very long time to recover from them. This is true notwithstanding the fact that individuals may enrich themselves during the very same genocidal process that imposes such huge costs on the perpetrator society. The following brief sketches are intended to convey an idea of the direction of the argument by presenting some typical cases. The list is not meant to be exhaustive.

#### THE ALBIGENSIAN CRUSADE

The Albigensian Crusade was the first ideological genocide and it is included here because it gave rise to the Inquisition - an institution that developed many of the techniques of persecution that are still in wide use today. The Albigensian Crusade took place in the first half of the thirteenth century in the Languedoc, an area that has no precise geographical boundaries, but generally refers to the south of France. The Languedoc at that time was distinct from France because the people spoke a different language and because it was much more highly developed. Politically, the region was highly decentralized - a state of affairs that greatly facilitated freedom and independence among its people.

Germany and the Soviet Union in occupied territories may appear to be external genocides. However, from the perpetrators' points of view they were not; both perceived these territories as having become part of their own realm as a result of conquest.



citizens' rights regardless of nationality or creed.<sup>14</sup> Economically, it was a wealthy, mostly regional, economy that benefitted from control over several trade routes. Culturally, the region was host to hundreds of troubadours who travelled from court to court.<sup>15</sup> Occitan was the language of poetry and of literature. Religiously, it was tolerant of all beliefs and of a host of itinerant preachers. But the Catholic Church was unpopular because the clergy's worldly affairs were more important to them than the spiritual well-being of their flocks. It was probably the richest area in Europe in terms of agriculture, trade, cosmopolitan culture, and the standard of living of its people - at a time when Berlin was just beginning to be founded. Several heresies flourished and found an interested audience even among the aristocracy and especially at the court of the Count of Toulouse. This tolerance was not shared by the papal authorities who called for a crusade to wipe out this threat to their authority. The king of France fielded the required troops and reaped the benefits of enlarging his kingdom.

The crusaders killed not only the heretics and their sympathisers, but also many innocent bystanders. After the fall of the city of Béziers in 1209 the abbot was asked by the crusaders how to distinguish the heretics from the good Catholics. His oft-quoted order - "Kill them all, for God knows his own!"<sup>16</sup> - may not be historically correct, but it is a critical comment on

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<sup>14</sup> Zoé Oldenbourg, *Massacre at Montségur* (New York: Pantheon, 1961), 24.

<sup>15</sup> W. L. Wakefield, *Heresy, Crusade and Inquisition in Southern France, 1100-1250* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1974), ch.iii.

<sup>16</sup> Henry Charles Lea, *The Inquisition of the Middle Ages*. Vol.1. (New York: Russell & Russell, 1955), 154.

the Crusade and might well serve as a motto for any ideological or supposedly ideological genocide.<sup>17</sup> The crusaders ravaged the countryside, looting and burning, cutting down orchards and vineyards, and poisoning wells. As a result, famine and sickness killed more people than actual battles. The crusade was too successful; it not only exterminated the heretics, it also ruined agriculture and commerce so thoroughly that the Languedoc has not fully recovered to this day and is still considered a depressed region.

The Albigensian Crusade was a transitional case in the sense that the victims were a group outside the perpetrator state (as had been true of earlier genocides) while the motive was to enforce conformity to a belief system (which makes it an early case of the transition to ideological genocides so common in the twentieth century). This case is included here to highlight the main argument of this paper. When the victims were located outside the perpetrator state, it was obvious that the victim society or state suffered enormously -- this was so obvious that nobody seriously questioned it. It was also taken for granted that the perpetrator state reaped benefits in terms of wealth and acquisition of territory. However, when the victim group is located inside the perpetrator state a great deal of this cost and suffering does not simply disappear -- it is now located inside the perpetrator state and cannot be confined only to the victim group. This phenomenon has received very little attention, although the proposition that a state can victimize and exterminate one of its constituent parts without damage to the whole seems on the surface implausible. This important point should become clearer by examining several cases where the perpetrator state victimizes one of its constituent parts. These cases occur most

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<sup>17</sup> Zoé Oldenbourg, *Massacre at Montségur* (New York: Pantheon, 1961), 116.



frequently in the twentieth century and involve most often an ideological genocide. But, before we get to the twentieth century, it is important to look at another transitional case because it developed and refined many of the techniques of persecution that are still in use today.

## THE SPANISH INQUISITION

The Spanish Inquisition is not usually considered a genocide at all because the non-believers could emigrate or convert to Christianity, and because the heretics could confess and abjure their errors. It is considered as a major genocide here because the most crucial part of any definition of genocide is that there must be an intent to destroy a group. While evidence of intent may be difficult to obtain in many other cases, the Spanish Inquisitors left no doubt about their aims.<sup>18</sup> They wanted to destroy all traces of heresy, whether these were of Islamic, Jewish, or Protestant origin, or were deviations from orthodox Roman Catholicism; but they were less interested in individual deviations from orthodoxy than in collective deviations. This became quite clear through the requirement that confessions include the names of others who failed to conform. They enforced such orthodoxy by forcible conversions, imprisonment, penances, burning at the stake, or expulsions. But they went beyond Spain to propagate the true faith and to do battle with any group that believed otherwise. The Inquisition was established in Mexico and South America as

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<sup>18</sup> Juan A. Llorente, *History of the Spanish Inquisition: abridged from the original work of M. Llorente by Leonard Gallois. Translated by an American* (New York: G. C. Morgan, 1826), 77-78, 83-86.

well as in the Low Countries. In the latter it was introduced by Philip II in 1560 to cope with the growing Reformation movements. The resulting rebellion soon became mixed up with heresy to such an extent that, "... for economy of effort, a decree of the Inquisition (confirmed by Royal Proclamation) condemned all the inhabitants of the Netherlands to death as heretics, save for a few specially exempted persons - a total of some 3,000,000 souls: the men being generally burned and the women buried alive."<sup>19</sup> Although the Dutch War of Independence intervened and prevented the carrying out of this sentence in its entirety, the Duke of Alva is said to have boasted that during his rule 18,600 persons were executed and many times that number were driven into exile.

The goal of the Inquisition was to create a homogeneous Catholic realm. The converts were, however, never fully accepted; even after several generations they were still referred to as "New Christians" and suspected of secretly adhering to their former faith. Since accusations of heresy were difficult to prove, the Inquisition asked citizens to report to it such suspicious behavior as: abstinence from wine or pork, traditional dances or songs at weddings, scrupulous regard for personal cleanliness, the use of Hebrew or Arabic language, or any observance of Jewish or Islamic law. Baths were destroyed, including those in the Alhambra.<sup>20</sup> Victims were severely punished, including burning at the stake, and their property was confiscated. Many had to flee for their lives. Before the expulsion of the Jews and the Moors and the persecution of the Conversos (or Marranos, as

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<sup>19</sup>Cecil Roth, *The Spanish Inquisition* (New York: Norton, 1964; c.1937), 173.

<sup>20</sup> Roth, op. cit., Chapters VI and VII.



converted Jews were referred to) and Moriscos (converted Moors), Spain flourished, and not only economically. It was a seat of learning, of philosophy, and of the arts. Arabic, Greek, Hebrew, and Latin language and literature interacted through translation and enriched each other. Spanish culture and learning influenced much of the rest of contemporary Europe. But after the edict of 1567, on the anniversary of the surrender of Grenada, a huge book-burning took place there and henceforth owning a book in Arabic was an offence that was severely punished. Andalusia, deprived of its skilled population, became a desert; the old system of irrigation fell into disrepair, and what had once been the garden of Spain is today still an underdeveloped area.

The expansion of trade and the establishment of colonies by both Spain and Portugal took place during this same period. Iberian ships sailed to the ends of the world. But even here the motives were not purely economic. While trade and the acquisition of wealth financed the journeys, spreading the gospel and the saving of souls justified them. The proselytizing was done so successfully that in the early seventeenth century it caused Japan to enact several so-called exclusion decrees which effectively closed that country to the rest of the world until the nineteenth century.<sup>21</sup>

After the purification of Spain from all non-Catholic influences it began to stagnate. The Inquisition had exacted a terrible toll. In addition to the millions that were forced to emigrate, Juan Llorente, who was secretary general of the Inquisition before he too came under suspicion, gives us the following totals for the period from 1481 to 1820: 34,658 were burned alive; 288,214 were condemned to the gallows or prison (mostly for life);

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<sup>21</sup> George B. Sansom, *A History of Japan: 1615-1867* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1963), 36-39.

and 18,049 were burned in effigy (because they had escaped before they could be arrested);<sup>22</sup> He ends with this summary:

Not only has the Inquisition decimated the population of Spain by her autos de fe, but has considerably reduced it by provoking civil wars, revolts, and expulsion of the Jews and the Moors. More than five million of inhabitants have disappeared from the fine soil of Spain whilst the Holy Office has exercised its terrible administration, and we can say of this barbarous institution what Montesquieu said of an emperor of the East, - 'Justinian, who destroyed sects by the sword and by laws, and who by compelling them to revolt, was obliged to exterminate them, rendered their provinces uncultivated. He believed he had augmented the number of the faithful: he did nothing but diminish that of men'.<sup>23</sup> (If Llorente's figure was at all close, it represented over one third of Spain's population.)

For a while, the wealth brought home from the newly acquired colonies kept Spain afloat economically. The cultural decline was much more rapid. In both areas Spain has not recovered to this day. Its economy is still one of the poorer ones in Europe; its cultural and intellectual life has still not produced a world-class university. It seems clear that the cost of enforcing conformity to its homogeneously Catholic society has been very high.

The Papal Inquisition was established in the thirteenth century and the use of torture was authorized by a Papal Bull in 1252. It was only in 1834 that the Inquisition was finally suppressed in Spain, although it had already

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<sup>22</sup> Llorente, op. cit., 248.

<sup>23</sup> Llorente, op. cit., 249.



become inactive in the late 18th century. But it was only in 1860 that the official and disabling distinction between Old Christians and New Christians was abolished in Spain, and that the certificate of *limpieza*, or purity of blood, was no longer required for certain careers. In 1869 the principle of religious toleration was incorporated into the Spanish constitution. It took until 1931 for religious equality also to become part of the Spanish constitution.<sup>24</sup>

### THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

The Armenians were the victims of a genocide carried out during World War I by Turkey which then was an ally of Germany. The Ottoman empire had been declining for some time and Turkey was trying to orient itself toward a nationalistic ideology centered on the image of an ethnic Turkic state in which there was no room for a foreign, non-Moslem group. While the Armenians were predominantly peasants, they also played a major role in the skilled trades, commerce, and the professions. Their elimination had both short-term and long-term consequences. The former became almost immediately felt during the war. A couple of illustrations may suffice here.

The completion of the Berlin-Bagdad railroad, the construction of which had been started long before the war, was considered to be of prime strategic importance, especially since there were very few all-weather roads in Turkey. The German embassy and the railroad company's management were engaged in protracted negotiations with the Turkish government because the project was in financial difficulties that threatened it with bankruptcy. To add to these problems, the Turkish authorities were arresting and killing the Armenian construction crews; the result was that

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<sup>24</sup> Roth, op. cit., 268-269.

two-thirds of the originally scheduled work was left undone.<sup>25</sup> The negotiators tried very hard to convince the Turkish rulers that the completion of the railroad was a top priority within the overall war effort -- without success. The majority of the workers were Armenians and they were slaughtered. The result was that the railroad was not completed before the war ended.<sup>26</sup>

Another illustration concerns the great demands for health care by the Turkish army as well as the civilian population during wartime. Although the demands for medical services were far beyond what could be met by available resources, Armenian health professionals -- both doctors and nurses -- were liquidated without hesitation and often with the complicity of their Turkish colleagues.<sup>27</sup>

The long-range consequences of the genocide of the Armenians by Turkey are more diffuse and not quite as easy to measure. In addition to losing the war, Turkey had also lost much of its skilled labour force, its professionals, and its commercial and trading elites. This has dramatically

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<sup>25</sup> Ulrich Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire: 1914-1918* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1968), see: Ch.VII. "The Armenian Persecutions." and Ch.IX. "The Bagdad Railroad."

<sup>26</sup> In July 1940, during World War II, the last unfinished section of the original 'Berlin to Bagdad' railroad was finally completed, and through-train service all the way from the Bosphorus to Bagdad became a reality.

Trumpener, op. cit., 316.

<sup>27</sup> Dadrian, V.N. "The Role of Turkish Physicians in the World War I Genocide of Ottoman Armenians," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* vol. 1, no .2 (1986): 183.



retarded its economic development, the effects of which are observable to this day. It also continues to suffer diplomatically on the international scene because its present government continues to deny that a genocide did occur; instead, it invests heavily in denial propaganda - both at the political level as well as by sponsoring scholarly conferences and publications. These activities, together with its record of continued human rights violations, are helping to bar it from admission to the European Community - a membership that its government covets.<sup>28</sup> Finally, there are a number of consequences for both national and international law that have recently been discussed by Dadrian, but that are too complex to be considered here.<sup>29</sup>

#### GENOCIDES IN THE SOVIET UNION

The people of the U.S.S.R. experienced a great deal of persecution under Stalin's reign of terror, and it is quite easy to demonstrate the enormous costs of these genocidal campaigns to Soviet society.<sup>30</sup> In the 1930s Stalin decided to eliminate the so-called class of kulaks. Many were killed

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<sup>28</sup> "This Week" *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, Vol. 141, No. 25 (December 24, 1989): 6.

<sup>29</sup> Vahakn N. Dadrian, "Genocide as a Problem of National and International Law: The World War I Armenian Case and its Contemporary Legal Ramifications." *Yale Journal of International Law* vol.14, no. 2 (Summer 1989): 221-334.

<sup>30</sup> Robert Conquest, *The Great Terror: Stalin's Purge in the Thirties* (New York: Macmillan, 1968), and James E. Mace, "Genocide in the U.S.S.R." Ch.6 in Israel W. Charny, ed., *Genocide: a Critical Bibliographic Review* (London: Mansell, 1988).

outright, many more died in the Gulag, and the survivors were forcibly converted to collectivized agriculture.<sup>31</sup> The result: what had been an agriculture that without modern equipment like tractors and combines had produced a large surplus for export, became an agriculture that has not recovered to this day; the U.S.S.R. has been an importer of foodstuffs ever since.<sup>32</sup>

A little later Stalin decided that the military were not to be trusted. He proceeded to wipe out almost the entire officer corps.<sup>33</sup> When Germany attacked in spite of Stalin's pact with Hitler, the Soviet war effort was in the hands of inexperienced and rapidly promoted junior officers. It seems reasonable to suppose that there might have been fewer defeats and lower casualties if experienced senior officers had remained in command. Roy Medvedev writes that with better leadership the Soviet army would have defeated the Nazi aggressors sooner and farther west without the cost of 20 million lives.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>Mace, James E., "The Man-Made Famine of 1933 in the Soviet Ukraine: What Happened and Why?" Ch.5 in Israel W. Charny, ed., *Toward the Understanding and Prevention of Genocide*. (Boulder, Col.: Westview, 1984), and Anton Antonov-Ovseyenko, *The Time of Stalin: Portrait of a Tyrant*. Translated from the Russian by George Saunders. (New York: Harper & Row, 1981), 55-68.

<sup>32</sup> Roy A. Medvedev, *Let History Judge: the Origins and Consequences of Stalinism*. (New York: Vintage Books, 1973, c.1971), 486, tells us that "per capita grain production in 1953 was 19 percent lower than 1913."

<sup>33</sup>Antonov-Ovseyenko, op. cit., 182-190.

<sup>34</sup> Roy A. Medvedev, op. cit., 465. Recent reports in Pravda (Moscow) put

Industrial production also suffered severely because the purges fell heavily on the industrial elite: managers, technicians, scientists, designers, etc. This led to extraordinary turn-over rates. It was not uncommon for an enterprise to have five managers during the course of one year; of those who held key positions in the railroad system in November 1938 only 24 percent had been holding their jobs for at least one year.<sup>35</sup> Barbara Katz tried to measure the negative impact of the purges and of the preparations for war on industrial performance during the period of 1938-1940. She found that the purges were more important in affecting the level of industrial output than the preparations for war.<sup>36</sup>

Insofar as these purges focused on specific groups of people, they should be considered as genocides. The military, economic, political, scientific, and intellectual elites and the peasants do not qualify under the United Nations definition - which is the very reason why that definition is not very useful for scholarly purposes. The members of these groups were not targeted by Stalin as individuals; their associates, friends and families shared their guilt, and though their accusations were spurious, the results were no less real for all that.

Even the authorities in Moscow have lately begun to acknowledge the mass killings of the Stalin regime and the costs to their own society. Therefore, there is no need to go into the other genocidal persecutions of the figure at 26 million lives lost.

<sup>35</sup> Barbara Goody Katz, *A Quantitative Evaluation of the Economic Aspect of the Great Purges of the Soviet Union*. Ph.D. dissertation in Economics and History, University of Pennsylvania, 1973, 9-10.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 342.



the Stalin era. Once a perpetrator country acknowledges the historical facts, the evidence to support the argument about the consequences of genocide becomes widely available. 'Perestroika' as promulgated by Gorbachev can be interpreted, in this context, as an effort to make up for the the expensive and long-lasting consequences for Soviet society of the genocides of the Stalin era.

### NAZI GERMANY AND THE HOLOCAUST

The case of Nazi Germany is a very special one, in this context as well as in others: first, because West Germany has openly acknowledged its guilt, and second, because West German scholars themselves have started to look at the costs for Germany. These costs may be roughly divided into those incurred up to the end of World War II , and those continuing to be exacted since then.

In the first category may be cited the loss of human resources in those areas where Jews excelled. Engelmann provides a list of notable Jewish men and women in medicine.<sup>37</sup> Weinreich deals with antisemitism in the universities and its effects.<sup>38</sup> Müller-Hill also deals with science in academia.<sup>39</sup> All such accounts may be summarized briefly enough: before Hitler, Germany had several world-famous universities and collected a disproportionately high number of Nobel prizes; since World War II,

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<sup>37</sup>Bernt Engelmann, *Germany Without Jews*. Translated by D. J. Beer. (Toronto: Bantam Books, 1984), 333-353.

<sup>38</sup> Max Weinreich, *Hitler's Professors*. (New York: Yivo, 1946).

<sup>39</sup>Benno Müller-Hill, *Murderous Science*. Translated by George R. Fraser. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988)

Germany arguably has no outstanding university in either of its two halves and receives a disproportionately low number of Nobel prizes. But even when Jews were used only as slave labour in German war industry or in factories associated with concentration camps, it was more important to kill them than to let them work.

The I.G.Farben plants near Auschwitz provide a particularly bizarre case study; one of them was designed to produce gasoline and methanol and another one was to produce a synthetic rubber called 'buna'. Construction was started in April 1941 at that location because careful studies had shown that it would meet all important demands: water and rail transport were available and it would provide both labour and protection from Allied bombing (both of the latter two calculations turned out to be wrong). These plants almost immediately found themselves short of labour. Since there were not nearly enough people living in the area to provide an adequate labour force, the original Auschwitz camp was enlarged and several new camps were built. Because the great marching distance between the building site and the camps decreased the available time and energy for work, later camps were built closer to the actual work site.<sup>40</sup> "The SS authorities in charge of the camp labor allocation were infuriated by the large number of Jews sent directly to the gas chambers" and "As early as December 28, 1942, Himmler had ordered the death rate reduced" because

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<sup>40</sup> Josiah E. DuBois, jr., in collaboration with Edward Johnson *Generals in Grey Suits: The Directors of the International "I.G.Farben" Cartel, their Conspiracy and Trial at Nuremberg*. (London: The Bodley Head, 1953; first published as *The Devil's Chemists: 24 Conspirators of the International Farben Cartel who Manufacture Wars*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1952), 156 and 222.

of the reported labour shortage in the plants.<sup>41</sup> By the summer of 1944 -- the first Allied bombing raid did not take place until August 20, 1944 -- the synthetic oil plant had achieved a peak production of 3,000 tons a month, which was only half of I.G.Farben's original projections. The Allied bombing raids gradually reduced this output. Although buna rubber production was planned to start in the second half of 1943, not a single pound of synthetic rubber was ever produced. DuBois' scathing summary is worth quoting:

In Agra, India, the sweat and toil of 22,000 slaves at least resulted in a beautiful building, the Taj Mahal. But Buna-Auschwitz was not only the most appalling failure in the history of modern industry - it had no parallel anywhere in history in the uneconomical exploitation of labor. Human beings were dissipated so unmercifully that after almost four years the construction was still unfinished. . . . At a human cost of 200,000 lives - plus a quarter-billion Reichsmark - not one pound of rubber was ever produced at I.G.Auschwitz! <sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>Robert Simon Yavner, based on German documents captured after the war, and reported in: *I. G. Farben's Petro-Chemical Plant at Auschwitz* (M.A. thesis, Old Dominion University, 1984), 47 and 49. However, Himmler had no patience with humanitarian feelings and is reported to have said: "What does it matter to us? Look away if it makes you sick." Quoted from the Nuremberg trial records, in Joseph Borkin, *The Crime and Punishment of I.G.Farben*. (New York: The Free Press, 1978), 139. Borkin's title is somewhat misleading since there was a very great deal of crime and very little punishment.

<sup>42</sup>DuBois, op. cit., 341. This conclusion is confirmed by Joseph Borkin,



It has also been suggested that the extensive use of rail transport during the implementation of the Holocaust interfered with the sending of troops and materiel to the front. As to the troops themselves, their number was dramatically diminished by the implementation of Nazi racial policies and by the additional numbers that would have served if there had been no anti-Jewish policy. Though it may be difficult to agree on actual numbers, there is no doubt that this effect was considerable.<sup>43</sup> Finally, some have argued, though it could never be proved, that without the costs of the Holocaust Germany might have won the war -- in part because it would probably have had the atom bomb first.<sup>44</sup>

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op.cit.: "... in the final tally, I.G.Auschwitz was a miserable failure. Despite the investment of almost 900 million Reichsmark and thousands of lives, only a modest stream of fuel and not a single pound of Buna rubber was ever produced." 127.

<sup>43</sup>Englemann, op.cit., chapter 6. Also: "The extermination of . . . human beings . . . impeded the conduct of the war because thousands of SS men, who were fit for active service but who were engaged on this operation, were lacking at the front - all in all the equivalent of several divisions -, because the daily mass transports to the extermination camps, right across Europe, were depriving the fighting forces of an appreciable amount of rolling stock which was in short supply and which was urgently needed for supplies." Sebastian Haffner, *The Meaning of Hitler*. Translated by Ewald Osers (New York: Macmillan, 1979), 126.

<sup>44</sup>Engelmann, op. cit., "... both the United States' possession of atom bombs before the end of the Second World War and the failure to develop nuclear weapons in Hitler's Germany were an inevitable consequence, directly and

In the second category of costs, those incurred after World War II, one would start with the enormous loss of talent and expertise that is clearly observable in those areas where the Jews had excelled. One might also point to Germany's loss of international prestige as the information about what had happened spread throughout the world. Additionally, most Germans consider the division of their country into the two Germanies to have been a major loss. Several German authors have written books about the many ways in which Germany and the world, particularly the Western world, would have been a different place had the Holocaust and its costs not changed it in so many ways.<sup>45</sup>

#### THE CAMBODIAN TRAGEDY

Cambodia will be the last case to be mentioned. We have here an almost pure case of ideological genocide. In April 1975 the Khmer Rouge came to power in Cambodia and renamed the country Kampuchea. In a little over three and a half years -- by January 1979 they were out of power -- they indirectly, of Nazi 'racial' persecution." 205. Robert Jungk in *Brighter than a Thousand Suns: a Personal History of the Atomic Scientists*. (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1958), expresses the same judgement in a more nuanced way: "Four factors combined to frustrate the construction of a German atom bomb. In the first place the absence of the eminent physicists driven into exile by Hitler proved a severe handicap." 88.

<sup>45</sup>Engelmann, op. cit., ch.10 and Sebastian Haffner, op. cit., 99-145.

Haffner's sarcasm is worth quoting: "...what one would not find in the whole of world history is a man who, with an unparalleled and gigantic effort, achieved, as Hitler did, the exact opposite of what he had hoped to achieve." 100.

attempted to achieve their special form of pure communism in one fell swoop, rather than gradually. The costs of this attempt were so devastating that some authors have referred to it as 'autogenocide', seeing in it an analogy to suicide.<sup>46</sup>

When the Khmer Rouge came to power, Cambodia probably had a population of about 7 million people.<sup>47</sup> Since no reliable figures on the number of victims are available, Etcheson lists the estimates of a dozen authors.<sup>48</sup> His own estimate is that "At least a third and possibly as many as one-half of the Khmer people have perished as a result of war, disease and starvation, and political terror" between 1970 and 1983.<sup>49</sup> Dramatic as these population losses were, their consequences were to inhibit even in the future almost all forms of development because the educated, the intelligentsia, the professionals, and the technicians were all targeted for immediate elimination because they represented the bourgeoisie and its foreign influences.

Soon after coming to power, the Khmer Rouge under Pol Pot emptied the cities by killing the members of the above-mentioned groups and by driving the rest of the population into the countryside.<sup>50</sup> They tried to build a new

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<sup>46</sup> For instance, Mr. Boudhiba, the chairman of the U.N. Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, as quoted in Leo Kuper, *Genocide*, 171.

<sup>47</sup> Kuper, *Genocide*, 157.

<sup>48</sup> Craig Etcheson, *The Rise and Demise of Democratic Kampuchea* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1984), 148.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 149.

<sup>50</sup> "In Phnom Penh itself there is no drinking water, no post or telephone,



society from the ground up by destroying all linkages to the past. They abolished the traditional history of the country. They introduced a primitive barter economy that would function without money. They rejected all forms of specialized skill and knowledge, preferring to place their trust in the native ability of the uneducated peasantry. Much detail is not yet known and much may never be known because it was either not recorded or the records have been lost or destroyed.<sup>51</sup>

The Khmer Rouge ruined agriculture by their rejection of traditional expertise and social organization. Irrigation projects suffered from faulty design and workmanship because the people with training in irrigation engineering had been eliminated; when they finally had to retreat in 1979, the Khmer Rouge sabotaged some of those irrigation works that were still working. All this resulted in wide-spread starvation; but the famine was eventually self-limiting as the surviving population decreased dramatically.<sup>52</sup>

The imposition of a pure communism also destroyed industry, partly as a result of the radical rustication programme, partly due to the rejection of technology and of machinery (except for war), and partly due to the abolition of money and of private property.

no transport, no registry office, no money, no markets . . . " Jean Pierre Gallois of Agence France Press reporting later, as quoted in William Shawcross, *The Quality of Mercy: Cambodia, Holocaust and Modern Conscience*. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984), 96.

<sup>51</sup> David P. Chandler and Ben Kiernan, eds., *Revolution and its Aftermath in Kampuchea: Eight Essays* (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1983) "Introduction".

<sup>52</sup> Etcheson, op.cit., 213-214.

In the final analysis, the Khmer Rouge revolution succeeded in destroying Cambodian society and social organization, including its cities, its educational and health systems, and its economy and agriculture.; but the Khmer Rouge failed entirely in creating the new society that their ideology called for. They were driven into remote border regions by the invading Vietnamese troops, who at the time of writing are withdrawing without leaving anyone in clear control of the country. Attempts at negotiating a coalition government among the several factions, all armed, seem not to be going well. The future seems very uncertain for Cambodia, except for the certainty that nothing good has come from the genocide.

## CONCLUSION

Finally, there is one consequence of genocide for the perpetrator society that all cases seem to have in common: an enormous increase in corruption. As life for the people in the perpetrator society, beset by restrictions and shortages, becomes increasingly difficult for most of its people - not only the victims of persecution - there will be more and more other people who will see this as an opportunity to enrich themselves. Unavailable goods and services will become available at a price. Once such practices become established, they are unlikely to disappear, and the perpetrator societies will continue to be subject to such practices long after the genocide has become history.

The list could be continued. But I think that the point is quite clear. Genocides that victimize a part of the population of the perpetrator country impose a huge cost on the perpetrator society. These costs are paid by many succeeding generations.

The lesson of history was, and still seems to be, that genocides produce material benefits for the perpetrator society. This was undoubtedly the case when the victims of genocides were a people outside the perpetrator society. But the process works differently in ideological genocides when the victims are located within, and are part of, the perpetrator society. In that case there are no benefits. Instead, there remain only enormous costs.

In attempting to make connections between historical events it is, of course, always difficult to establish proof. These examples of the deleterious consequences of genocides may have been the result of quite different factors. Thus, Strayer disagrees with the prevailing view of the consequences of the Albigensian Crusades and argues that "the economic depression of the fourteenth century and the ravages of the Hundred Years' War did more physical damage to Languedoc than the Crusades did."<sup>53</sup> It can also be argued, to give another example, that the continued failure of Soviet agriculture is the result of collectivization. Since it is safe to say that all historical events are the result of multiple causation, it is probably the case that Stalin's massacre of the kulaks and the drive to collectivize were both factors in the failure of agriculture. Instead of proof, one has to rely on the weight of the evidence and the plausibility of the argument.

#### AFTERWORD

For those of us who are committed to the prediction and the prevention of genocide the above argument seems to open up another possible avenue of action. If we can publicize such findings sufficiently, we may eventually be able to change the out-dated lesson from history about the benefits of

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<sup>53</sup>Joseph R Strayer, *The Albigensian Crusades*. (New York: Dial, 1971), 169.



genocide. That such lessons from history are not irrelevant is quite clearly illustrated by Hitler's reading of history. As Gulbekian has shown in his well-documented paper, Hitler's analysis of the uses of genocide was all positive and may be summarized by his often quoted question: "Wer redet heute noch von der Vernichtung der Armenier?" (Who today still speaks of the annihilation of the Armenians?)<sup>54</sup> The new lesson from history ought to be that genocides can be carried out only at enormous costs to the perpetrator society and that even the potential ideological benefits are never realized. Then, even if some future head of government were to follow Hitler's analysis, his people may refuse to go along with it or to remain passive bystanders.

Such analysis should be incorporated into the curriculum of the many courses on genocide and the Holocaust that are being established. In North America such course materials are being widely introduced into high schools, colleges, and universities. Curriculum proposals seem to generate heated debates about cases to be included or excluded. However, there is little debate about how to cover prediction and prevention -- in part because as yet there is so little known in this area. Therefore, the above analysis should be added to the curriculum so that eventually this knowledge may attain the status of conventional wisdom and contribute to the prevention of future genocides.

It seems very likely that with such conventional wisdom in wide currency the incidence of genocides will decline dramatically. Even if potential perpetrators would be tempted to test this finding on their own society, their own people would not support them in such plans, and

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<sup>54</sup>Edward V. Gulbekian, "The Poles and Armenians in Hitler's Political Thinking," *Armenian Review* vol.41 no.3/163 (Autumn 1988): 1-14.

without a minimum of such support a genocide can hardly be carried out. This latter point is crucial for the prevention of future genocides; the carrying out of a massive genocide does not necessarily require the active support of the population, but it does minimally require the passive acquiescence of the bystanders<sup>55</sup> -- and even that is hardly likely to be forthcoming when the prospect of the enormous costs has acquired the status of conventional wisdom.

Lest the above argument be misunderstood, let it be clear that these costs are not a reason for being opposed to genocide. Those reasons are based on humanitarian values that are much more important than any cost-benefit analysis. Surely, we should oppose mass killings even when there are material benefits. The enormous costs of ideological genocide to the perpetrator society are simply being employed here as one of the potential tools in our attempts at preventing genocides in the future.

Such efforts at preventing future genocides should have recourse to a wide variety of methods. We can never be quite sure which such efforts are going to be effective in a particular, concrete situation. Therefore, human rights activists and humanitarian organizations (not to mention governments) ought to be able to draw on a wide repertoire of actions to increase to probability of obtaining the desired results. It seems possible to develop strategies for such actions in the fields of education (including adult education), early warning research, publicity and public relations, economic

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<sup>55</sup> Hermann Langbein, "Genocid im 20. Jahrhundert: Protocol einer Podiumsdiskussion" (Genocide in the 20th Century: Transcript of a Panel Discussion), *Frankfurter Hefte* (West Germany) vol.31, no.5 (1976): 21-34. Several of the participants emphasized the role of the bystanders.

sanctions, organizational and international pressures, etc. The elaboration of such a repertoire of strategies and methods for potentially preventive actions will have to await a future paper.



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The Institute is based in the Departments of History and Sociology at Concordia University. Its approach is comparative and historical, involving scholars in Canada, the United States, Great Britain, and France. It collects and disseminates knowledge about the historical origins of the mass killings that have become such a prominent part of the twentieth century. The Institute accomplishes its objectives through research, teaching, and publication. It has a special interest in promoting teaching about genocide in high schools, colleges, and universities. It seeks to acquire and to improve access to scholarly resources on genocide. It also seeks to encourage research by organizing seminars and workshops, and by offering the use of its resources and its hospitality to students and colleagues.

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